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History 11, pd.2

1-16-12

**It’s now Hawaii**

How did American influences create revolution, reaction and reform in and to Native Hawaiian culture?

***Introduction***

In the middle of the Pacific there are the islands of Hawai’i. There are eight major islands that are famous for their great beaches, friendly people and amazing tropical settings. The Modern Hawaii is a preferred place to live and consists of many ethnic backgrounds. However, Hawai’i wasn’t the place it is today. Hawai’i had constant interaction and influence from the Western and American people during the 1700’s till present day Hawaii. From the first appearances of Westerners of Captain cook to the bombing of Pearl Harbor, Hawai’i was the only islands in the pacific that consisted of major western and mainly American influence.

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***James Cook***

The early Hawaiians were a whole entire civilization based on their own beliefs and their own way of life. They existed in a habitat that provided them with all the resources needed in order to live. They were first visited by westerners on January 18, 1778 by an English explorer named Captain James Cook. When he arrived to the Hawaiian Islands which he called the Sandwich Islands, he was mistaken for the Hawaiian God Lono. He and his crew were treated like Gods with all the spoils that these Hawaiian people had to offer. However, one of Captain Cook’s ship members had died while there. It showed that Cooks people were not Gods and made the ties between the two more of a conflict. Sadly, the Hawaiians had turned on Captain Cook and his crew members, killing several of Cooks crew members and Cook himself. The survivors left the Islands back to England and shared what happened to the people of England. The English soon returned and helped to establish the Hawaiian Monarchy. (Kamakau, Ruling Chiefs of Hawaii, 1992, pp. 92-104)

***Missionaries***

Later in the years after the American Revolution, Catholic Missionaries from Boston on a ship called the “Thaddeus,” sailed to the Islands. There were 14 men and women aboard and they were lead by Rev. Hiram Bingham. (Kame'eleihiwa, 1992, pp. 169-180) The Missionaries were allowed by the King of Hawai’i, to preach to the Hawaiians. These Missionaries were successful in converting many of the Hawaiians to their religion. They taught the Hawaiians that there was only one God, they taught them to read and write and also the concept of clothing. The Missionaries helped to create the Hawaiian alphabet and taught the Hawaiians how to sew their own clothing. The most impacting style of clothing was the Muumuu, a Hawaiian dress that became popular in Hawai’i and even in the United States. An important cultural ritual that was banned in Hawai’i in the middle 1800’s was the art of Hula. It was banned because it was seen as adultery, but it became popular in the early 1900’s after being performed in San Francisco. After being introduced in America it became popular throughout North America and was even used in movies during Americas Great Depression.

***Ships of Trouble***

After the discovery and the impact of the Missionaries, whalers started to visit the Islands. They used the Island as a rest point and also a place to mingle with the Hawaiian people, mainly the young Hawaiian women. During the 1820’s over a 150 whaling ships arrived in Hawai’i annually. They brought some negatives to the Hawaiian people. An example was the exposure to alcohol. This affected the Hawaiian people in the longevity of them. The whalers had also brought very impacting diseases that were devastating in the Hawaiian Islands. The Whalers committed crimes of rape towards young Hawaiian girls because they could easily get away with the crime. At this time there were many westerners in Hawai’i and the Hawaiians were developing bad habits.

***Unwelcomed enemies***

In the 1840-1850’s the problem of measles and STD’s had devastated the Hawaiian people. With a heavy population of missionaries and whalers it had caused the problem of transmitted diseases that could not be controlled in the islands. The Hawaiian people had no type of immunity to these devastating diseases and most of them had died due to no treatment and little help by the Americans. The once one million native Hawaiians in the early 1700 had dropped to 84, 165 Native Hawaiians in 1850. The once strong and long living Hawaiians were now devastated by disease and the influences of westerners in American and in Europe. Hawai’i now was changing into a more western atmosphere. (Kame'eleihiwa, 1992, pp. 140-142)

***Acts of Faith***

A devastating disease called the leprosy disease had caused many problems in the Hawaiians Islands. The people who had caught this type of disease were captured and were transported to the Island of Moloka’i in the Kalawao settlement. Once they were there they were vanished from society and had to co-exist with other leprosy patients. The living conditions were undesirable and they had little hope. However, a miracle took place in which a man name Damien at the age of 33 arrived in the islands doing his duties in caring for the Leprosy patients. Damien was born in Belgium. Damien was a father of the Church and was sent to Hawai’i on a mission to care for the leprosy patients. He did an awesome job and truly was an angel and hope to the patients. Damien worked 16 years with the leprosy patients and was a renowned example of Christian love and compassion. He helped to give these patients hope through the reforming of the people into a community. He understood the true teachings of God, which was to care for those in need of help no matter who or what they have. He had spent so much time with the patients that even he caught the disease. He sadly and mournfully died on April 15, 1889, but his efforts and work would go on forever. Damien was selected on May 10, 1965 by Gov. John A. Burns as one of the first out of two in Hawai’i to be representatives in the Statuary hall in Washington D.C. Then due to his mission to care for the leprosy patients he was recently made a Saint. His efforts had major influence in the Hawaiian Islands and in Europe and America. (Diocese of Honolulu, Hawaii, 2009)

***Foreign Desires***

As the population and publicity of Hawai’i grew so did the need for a stable and profitable business product. Hawai’i had rich soil that provided perfect grounds for plantation. So the sugar cane was introduced to the islands and became an important part of American and Hawaiian history. American business men started to invest in sugar cane factories and plantations throughout the Hawaiian Islands. Sugar plantations were an important factor to Hawai’i from 1835 through the middle 1900’s. Sugar exports from Hawai’i were shipped to California during the Civil War but then decreased after the war ended. Then in 1876 the reciprocity treaty was passed between the United States and Hawai’i which allowed duty-free sales of Hawai’i sugar and other agriculture products in the United States as well as duty-free sales of most U.S. manufactured goods in Hawai’i. The increase in sugar demands caused several problems and influenced Hawai’i greatly. Immigrants started to come to Hawai’i for plantation work and land was needed which caused an even greater impact in Hawai’i later in the years. Races such as the Japanese, Chinese, and Portuguese immigrants had grew throughout the islands. This also marked Hawai’i as a major agriculture output for the United Sates from sugar cane, Dole’s pineapples and lastly coffee bean production.

***All is Lost***

Hawai’i had its own monarchy government that was established by the British and King Kamehameha the First. He had united the islands through many major battles and then declared himself the first King of Hawai’i with many kings to succeed him after his death. (Kamakau, Ruling Chiefs of Hawaii, 1992, pp. 142-158) At the time an interesting fact was that the Hawaiian people had the highest literacy level when compared with America and Europe. However, on Jan. 17, 1893 that all ended. On this day the Hawaiian monarchy was ended through a bloodless revolution by the Americans. It was a bloodless revolution because the Hawaiian soldiers and last Queen of Hawai’i, **Lili`uokalani,** had surrendered peacefully to the American soldiers who overthrew the palace. A group of American Business men leaded by Lorrin Thurston were the officials in planning the overthrow of the Hawaiian monarchy and had succeeded in doing it. Lorrin went to Washington to promote annexation, and he received an encouraging message from President Benjamin Harrison: “You will find an exceedingly sympathetic administration here.” Sanford Dole was one of these business men and he became the president of the provisional government that replaced the monarchy. The businessmen were focused on gaining more land for their plantation fields and making more profit. They got American soldiers from the warship USS Boston to come on land from the Honolulu Harbor and march to Hawaiian castle. With their guns pointed they took over the palace and the Queen surrendered so that there was no bloodshed for her people. The Royal Hawaiian Guard was ordered to disarm themselves of their weapons and surrender. Many Hawaiians were upset and news of the overthrow had traveled all the way to Washington D.C. Soon after the overthrow the Hawaiian Islands became a Territory of the United Sates, with a provisional government and a republic in between. This was a major revolution in Hawai’i for the bad and maybe the good.

***Dark skies***

After the revolution, a lagoon called Pearl Harbor by the Westerners became a major port and base for the U.S. Navy. There were many ships in this harbor and thousands of men. It was the major center of the pacific for the U.S. military and served as a major supply and training center. But on December 7, 1941, Pearl Harbor was bombed by the Japanese unexpectedly. The bombing had officially begun the war between the U.S. and Japan. There were about 90 ships at anchor in Pearl Harbor, the primary targets were the eight battleships anchored there. Seven were moored on Battleship Row along the southeast shore of Ford Island while the USS Pennsylvania (BB-38) lay in dry dock across the channel. Within the first minutes of the attack all the battleships adjacent to Ford Island had taken bomb and or by torpedo hits. The USS *West Virginia* (BB-48) sank quickly. The USS *Oklahoma* (BB-37) turned turtle and sank. Then about 8:10 a.m., the USS *Arizona* (BB-39) was mortally wounded by an armor piercing bomb which ignited the ship's forward ammunition magazine. The resulting explosion and fire killed 1,177 crewmen, the greatest loss of life on any ship that day and about half the total number of Americans killed. The USS *California* (BB-44), USS *Maryland* (BB-46), USS *Tennessee* (BB-43) and USS *Nevada* (BB-36) also suffered varying degrees of damage in the first half hour of the raid. Hawai’i was all over the news and had marked that day as a sad and mournful day for the souls lost during the bombing. Soldiers from the War in Germany were sent to fight against Japan and many Native Hawaiians answered the call to serve in the U.S. military. Native Hawaiians had served in the American Civil war, World War II, the war in Vietnam, the war in Korea and even in today’s war in the Middle East. There were many patriotic Hawaiians during this time that gave their lives serving their country and most importantly the Island of Hawai’i. (A&E Television Networks, LLC, 1996-2011)

***A new Beginning***

With many ties between America and Hawai’i, there was much consideration of making Hawai’i the last state of the United States. So on August 21, 1959, now Hawaii became an official state by order of President Dwight D. Eisenhower and officially put it on the American flag as the 50th star. Some states agreed to Hawai’i becoming a state, while some did not. The ties between the United States and Hawai’i increased and changed Hawai’i even more through tourism and business wise. Now the Native Hawaiians were called Americans and also had a native culture heritage. The Islands then established a state government and started to teach the local kids more about the History of America. Airports were made, businesses grew throughout Honolulu. Each Island had an increase in population and more business. Holidays such as Christmas, New Years and etc. were now celebrated annually in the Islands. Mainland people were attracted to the islands because of the booming business and great living conditions. During the beginning of Statehood to the late 1900’s, Hawai’i had hit a boom in social, political and economic influences.

***Modern Hawaii***

Today’s modern Hawaii is going through a renaissance of the Hawaiian language and keeping the culture alive. This is a direct reaction of the Hawaiian people due to the overthrow of the Hawaiian monarchy and loss of common understanding of the native culture language and ways over the years. The true Hawaiian culture was lost along the way because it was replaced with American influences. A majority of Hawaiians today keep the native culture alive and be American citizens at the same time. During the early 1900’s to late 1980’s the Hawaiian language was banned in public and private schools. The Americans also banned Hawaiians from writing the Hawaiian language. The Americans also changed the way Hawai’i is pronounced, instead of Hawai’i its Hawaii. However, programs such as Hawaiian charter schools and even the Kamahameha schools strive to keep the Hawaiian culture alive. Kamehameha Schools is actually the second richest trustee in the Nation and is called the Bishop Estate. They hold many land divisions in the Hawaiian Islands and have established a good name for the Hawaiian people and the islands of Hawai’i. There students participate in many local and nationwide events. Now in the islands programs such as the Office of Hawaiian Affairs, Olelo a community media and many Hawaiian clubs help to keep the native dying native culture alive. Hawaii has its own recognized reform which if the Akaka Bill. The Akaka Bill is the Native Hawaiian Government Reorganization Act that reaffirms the political and legal relationship between the Native Hawaiians and the U.S. Its goal is to reestablish a Hawaiian government and focus on native Sovereignty. (Office of Hawaiian Affairs, 2011)

When surveying Hawaii today, the most immediate things that come to mind are that it’s the center of the pacific for tourism, military supply and military bases. Hawai’i was very influenced by the American military. This provides the reason why so many kids in Hawai’i are patriotic and consider joining the military as a job. Hawai’i business boomed and pay income in Hawai’i rose. Do to the increase in jobs and modern city’s the pay had increased and so did the cost to live in Hawai’i did. In the islands it cost a heavy sum to live comfortably without the worries of going bankrupt. Sadly due the increase of Western people the amount of pure or half Hawaiian people had decreased, a majority of minorities grew through the Islands. Hawai’i is one of the states with the most minority rates in the nation. Due to the influences of plantation work caused the major diversity in Hawai’i. Hawai’i was a place to house Vietnamese and Micronesians because of the United States agreeing to house them in the islands.

The Hawaiian Islands were a place of constant conflict and resolution. It was the center of the pacific for major change. From the early beginnings of time with Captain Cook visiting the islands, to the overthrow and to the economic boom it is today there were many changes in Hawai’i history. It’s a very controversial issue to either thank America for establishing Hawai’i in the way it is today. Many Native Hawaiians are mad about the way America took over and made Hawai’i a state. However, on the other hand some Hawaiians are proud to call themselves Americans. There is no doubt that America has influenced the islands. Hawai’i is a place of diversity and strong connections to America. Hawai’i embraces both Hawaiian influences and American influences. It’s a place true to its culture with patriotic ties and a place of revolution, reaction and reform.